

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 2, 4, 13, 18, 21 and 31, and cancel claim 3, such that pending claims 1, 2 and 4-31 are as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) Lighter than air aircraft characterised in that it comprises at least two balloons connected together by connecting means forming a chassis, wherein the connecting means are connected to at least one of the balloons through a mechanical connection articulated about at least one axis approximately parallel to the longitudinal axis of the aircraft, enabling the at least one connected balloon to pivot relative to the chassis.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~Aircraft according to claim 1, characterised in that~~ Lighter than air aircraft characterised in that it comprises at least two balloons connected together by connecting means forming a chassis, wherein the connecting means are connected to the balloons through an electromagnetic type connection.

3. (Canceled).

4. (Currently Amended) ~~Aircraft according to claim 1, characterised in that~~ Lighter than air aircraft characterised in that it comprises at least two balloons connected together by connecting means forming a chassis, wherein the balloon(s) on one side of the connecting means are connected to the balloon(s) on the other side of the connecting means by elastic means.

5. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 1, characterised in that the chassis includes carrying means designed to support equipment and / or at least one person.

6. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 5, characterised in that the carrying means are essentially within the volume lying between the balloons.

7. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 1, characterised in that the balloons and the connecting means together form an essentially symmetric assembly.

8. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 1, characterised in that it comprises a balloon on each side of the connecting means.

9. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 1, characterised in that it comprises two balloons on each side of the connecting means.

10. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 9, characterised in that the balloons lie in an approximately horizontal plane.

11. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 9, characterised in that the two balloons on the same side of the connecting means are placed one above the other.

12. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 1, characterised in that the aircraft comprises means of propulsion and / or controlling the stability of the aircraft.

13. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to claim 12, characterised in that the propulsion means comprise at least one first engine capable of producing a thrust along the longitudinal axis of the aircraft and located at ~~or close to~~ the centre of gravity of the aircraft.

14. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 12, characterised in that it comprises pitch control means.

15. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 14, characterised in that the pitch control means include at least two engines installed approximately on the longitudinal axis of the aircraft, one forward from the centre of gravity of the aircraft, and the other aft from the centre of gravity of the aircraft.

16. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 11, characterised in that it comprises roll control means.

17. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 16, characterised in that the roll control means comprise at least two engines installed on each side of the longitudinal axis of the aircraft, in an approximately horizontal plane.

18. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to claim 16, characterised in that the roll control means comprise roll control engines mounted on an axis perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the aircraft and passing through the centre of gravity of the aircraft ~~or close to it~~.

19. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 1, characterised in that it comprises stability control means which can act on the altitude of the aircraft.

20. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 1, characterised in that it comprises propulsion means which further comprise a means of displacing the aircraft laterally.

21. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to claim 20, characterised in that the lateral displacement means comprise at least two lateral engines capable of producing thrusts in opposite directions along a horizontal axis perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the aircraft and passing through ~~or close to~~ the centre of gravity of the aircraft.

22. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 1, characterised in that it comprises directional means.

23. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 22, characterised in that the directional means comprise at least one control surface.

24. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 23, characterised in that it comprises at least one left control surface and at least one right control surface mounted at the aft of the aircraft.

25. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 1, characterised in that it comprises at least one vertical stabiliser.

26. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 25, characterised in that it comprises at least one control surface mounted on the vertical stabiliser.

27. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 22, characterised in that the directional means comprise at least one orientation engine installed so as to produce at least a thrust transverse to the longitudinal axis of the aircraft.

28. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 27, characterised in that the directional means comprise at least two orientation engines mounted with respect to each other so as to produce thrusts in approximately opposite directions.

29. (Original) Aircraft according to claim 1, characterised in that it comprises remote control means, with or without wire.

30. (Original) Aircraft according to any claim 1, characterised in that the balloons are approximately cylindrical in shape.

31. (Currently Amended) Aircraft according to claim 1, characterised in that it comprises onboard at least one means belonging to the following group consisting of:

- picture taking means[.,,];
- communication and / or telecommunication means;
- sound pickup means;
- meteorological data acquisition means;

- radiation measurement means;
- air analysis means;
- geographic positioning means; and
- means of measuring the speed of objects on the ground and / or in the air and / or at sea.